

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Interr Application No
PC1/13/03654

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 C23C24/08 C25C3/08 C25C3/12

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)
IPC 7 C23C C25C

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 00 11243 A (NORA VITTORIO DE ;DURUZ JEAN JACQUES (CH); MOLTECH INVENT SA (LU)) 2 March 2000 (2000-03-02) page 10-14 ---	1-17, 22-31
X	US 2001/020590 A1 (DE NORA VITTORIO ET AL) 13 September 2001 (2001-09-13) paragraphs '0017!-'0074! -----	1-17, 22-31

Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.



Patent family members are listed in annex.

Special categories of cited documents:

- *A* document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- *E* earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- *L* document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- *O* document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- *P* document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

T later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

X document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone

Y document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

& document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

Date of mailing of the international search report

15 December 2003

22/12/2003

Name and mailing address of the ISA

European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2
NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk
Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Tx. 31 651 epo nl,
Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016

Authorized officer

Brisson, O

FURTHER INFORMATION CONTINUED FROM PCT/ISA/ 210

Continuation of Box I.2

Claims Nos.: 18-21, 32

According to the wording of claim 18, the subject-matter of this claim and its dependent claims 19-21 seems to be:

On the one hand, additional features of the method of any preceding claims dealing with the formation of a hematite-containing protective layer on a metal-based substrate. Actually, independent product claim 28 refers to these claims according to this first subject-matter,

On the other hand, a method for manufacturing a component of a metal electrowinning cell. Actually, independent claims 22, 27 and 32 refers to these claims according to this second subject-matter.

According to the wording of claim 32, the subject-matter of this claim seems to be :

On the one hand, additional features of the method of claims 30 or 31, On the other hand, a method of manufacturing a component which is alleged to be defined in claims 18 to 20 but the subject-matter of these last claims is not clearly defined (see above).

Since the subject-matter of claims 18-21, 32 is not clearly defined, a lack of clarity within the meaning of Article 6 PCT arises to such an extent as to render a meaningful search of the claims impossible. Consequently, the search has been carried out for those parts of the application which do appear to be clear, namely a method of forming a hematite-containing protective layer on a metal-based substrate as claimed in claims 1-17 or in claims 30 and 31.

The applicant's attention is drawn to the fact that claims, or parts of claims, relating to inventions in respect of which no international search report has been established need not be the subject of an international preliminary examination (Rule 66.1(e) PCT). The applicant is advised that the EPO policy when acting as an International Preliminary Examining Authority is normally not to carry out a preliminary examination on matter which has not been searched. This is the case irrespective of whether or not the claims are amended following receipt of the search report or during any Chapter II procedure.

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In International application No.
IB 03/03654

Box I Observations where certain claims were found unsearchable (Continuation of item 1 of first sheet)

This International Search Report has not been established in respect of certain claims under Article 17(2)(a) for the following reasons:

1. Claims Nos.: because they relate to subject matter not required to be searched by this Authority, namely:

2. Claims Nos.: 18-21, 32 because they relate to parts of the International Application that do not comply with the prescribed requirements to such an extent that no meaningful International Search can be carried out, specifically:
see FURTHER INFORMATION sheet PCT/ISA/210

3. Claims Nos.: because they are dependent claims and are not drafted in accordance with the second and third sentences of Rule 6.4(a).

Box II Observations where unity of invention is lacking (Continuation of item 2 of first sheet)

This International Searching Authority found multiple inventions in this international application, as follows:

1. As all required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers all searchable claims.

2. As all searchable claims could be searched without effort justifying an additional fee, this Authority did not invite payment of any additional fee.

3. As only some of the required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant, this International Search Report covers only those claims for which fees were paid, specifically claims Nos.:

4. No required additional search fees were timely paid by the applicant. Consequently, this International Search Report is restricted to the invention first mentioned in the claims; it is covered by claims Nos.:

Remark on Protest

The additional search fees were accompanied by the applicant's protest.
 No protest accompanied the payment of additional search fees.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

on patent family members

Inte----- Application No

PCT/HK3/03654

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
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		DE 69905913	D1 17-04-2003	
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		WO 0011243	A1 02-03-2000	
		NO 20010806	A 16-02-2001	
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